Miss in her TEENS:

OR, THE

MEDLEY of LOVERS.

A

FARCE

IN TWO ACTS.

As it is performed at the

Theatre-Royal in *Drury-Lane*.

By DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

The SEVENTH EDITION.

——— *pene puella puer.*

Printed in the Year M, DCC, LIX.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author takes this opportunity to return the public his thanks for their ſo favourable reception of the following trifle; the hint of which is taken from the French. Whether the plot and characters are altered for the better or worſe, may be ſeen by comparing it with La Pariſienne of D'Ancourt.

PROLOGUE.

Written by a FRIEND.

TOO long has farce, neglecting nature's laws,
Debas'd the ſtage, and wrong'd the comic cauſe;
To raiſe a laugh has been her ſole pretence,
Tho' dearly purchas'd at the price of ſenſe;
This child of folly gain'd increaſe with time;
Fit for the place, ſucceeded pantomime;
Reviv'd her honours, join'd her motly band,
And ſong, and low conceit, o'er-ran the land.
More gen'rous views inform our author's breaſt,
From real life his characters are dreſt:
He ſeeks to trace the paſſions of mankind,
And while he ſpares the perſon, paints the mind.
In pleaſing contraſt he attempts to ſhew
The vap'ring bully, and the fribbling beau,
Cowards alike, that full of martial airs,
And this as tender as the ſilk he wears.
Proud to divert, not anxious for renown,
Oft has the bard eſſay'd to pleaſe the town.
Your full applauſe out-paid his little art,
He boaſts no merit, but a grateful heart;
Pronounce your doom, he'll patiently ſubmit,
Ye ſovereign judges of all works of wit!
To you the ore is brought, a lifeleſs maſs,
You give the ſtamp, and then the coin may paſs.
Now whether judgment prompt you to forgive,
Whether you bid this trifling offſpring live,
Or with a frown ſhould ſend the ſickly thing,
To ſleep whole ages under dulneſs' wing;
To your known candour we will always truſt,
You never were, nor can you be unjuſt.

Dramatis Perſonae.

MEN.

SIR SIMON LOVEIT.	Mr. Taſwell.
Captain LOVEIT.	Mr. Havard.
FRIBBLE.	Mr. Garrick.
FLASH.	Mr. Woodward.
PUFF.	Mr. Yates.
JASPER.	Mr. Blakes.

WOMEN.

Miſs BIDDY.	Mrs. Green.
AUNT.	Mrs. Croſs.
TAG.	Mrs. Clive.

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MISS in her TEENS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *A STREET.*

Enter Captain LOVEIT *and* PUFF.

CAPTAIN.

THIS is the place we were directed to; and now, Puff, if I can get no intelligence of her, what will become of me?

Puff. And me too, Sir——You muſt conſider I am a married man, and cannot bear fatigue as I have done.——But pray, Sir, why did you leave the army ſo abruptly, and not give me time to fill my knapſack with common neceſſaries? half a dozen ſhirts, and your regimentals, are my whole cargo.

Capt. I was wild to get away, and as ſoon as I obtained my leave of abſence, I thought every moment an age till I returned to the place where I firſt ſaw this young, charming, innocent, bewitching creature——

Puff. With fifteen thouſand pounds for her fortune——ſtrong motives, I muſt confeſs.——And now, Sir, as you are pleaſed to ſay you muſt depend upon my care and abilities in this affair, I think I have a juſt right to be acquainted with the particulars of your paſſion, that I may be the better enabled to ſerve you.

Capt. You ſhall have them.——When I left the univerſity, which is now ſeven months ſince, my father, who loves his money better than his ſon, and would not ſettle a farthing upon me.——

Puff. Mine did ſo by me, Sir.——

Capt. Purchaſed me a pair of colours at my own requeſt; but before I joined the regiment which was going abroad, I took a ramble into the country with a fellow-collegian to ſee a relation of his who lived in Berkſhire——

Puff. ——A party of pleaſure, I ſuppoſe.

Capt. During a ſhort ſtay there, I came acquainted with this young creature; ſhe was juſt come from the boarding-

ſchool, and though ſhe had all the ſimplicity of her age and the country, yet it was mixed with ſuch ſenſible vivacity, that I took fire at once——

Puff. I was tinder myſelf at your age. But pray, Sir, did you take fire before you knew of her fortune?

Capt. Before, upon my honour.

Puff. Folly and conſtitution——but on, Sir.

Capt. I was introduced to the family by the name of Rhodophil, (for ſo my companion and I had ſettled it;) at the end of three weeks I was obliged to attend the call of honour in Flanders.

Puff. Your parting, to be ſure, was heart-breaking.

Capt. I feel it at this inſtant.——We vowed eternal conſtancy, and I promiſed to take the firſt opportunity of returning to her: I did ſo, but we found the houſe ſhut up, and all the information, you know, that we could get from the neighbouring cottage was, that miſs and her aunt were removed to town, and lived ſomewhere near this part of it.

Puff. And now we are got to the place of action, propoſe your plan of operation.

Capt. My father lives but in the next ſtreet, ſo I muſt decamp immediately for fear of diſcoveries; you are not known to be my ſervant, ſo make what inquiries you can in the neighbourhood, and I ſhall wait at the inn for your intelligence.

Puff. I will patrol hereabouts, and examine all that paſs; but I have forgot the word, Sir——Miſs Biddy——

Capt. Bellair——

Puff. A young lady of wit, beauty, and fifteen thouſand pounds fortune—but, Sir——

Capt. What do you ſay, Puff?

Puff. If your honour pleaſes to conſider that I had a wife in town whom I left ſomewhat abruptly half a year ago, you will think it, I believe, but decent, to make ſome enquiry after her firſt; to be ſure it would be ſome ſmall conſolation to me to know whether the poor woman is living, or has made away with herſelf, or——

Capt. Prithee do not diſtract me; a moment's delay is of the utmoſt conſequence; I muſt inſiſt upon an immediate compliance with my commands. [*Exit* Capt.

Puff. The devil is in theſe fiery young fellows! they think of no body's wants but their own. He does not conſider that I am fleſh and blood as well as himſelf. However I may kill

two birds at once; for I ſhall not be ſurpriſed if I meet my lady walking the ſtreets —— but who have we here? ſure I ſhould know that face.

Enter Jaſper *from a houſe.*

Who is that? my old acquaintance, Jaſper?

Jaſp. What, Puff! are you here?

Puff. My dear friend! [*Kiſſes him.*] well, and how Jaſper, ſtill eaſy and happy! *tojours le meme!*—What intrigues now? what girls have you ruined, and what cuckolds made, ſince you and I uſed to beat up together, eh?

Jaſp. Faith, buſineſs has been very briſk during the war; men are ſcarce, you know; not that I can ſay I ever wanted amuſement in the worſt of times—but hark ye, Puff——

Puff. Not a word aloud, I am *incognito.*

Jaſp. Why faith, I ſhould not have known you, if you had not ſpoke firſt; you ſeem to be a little *diſhabille* too, as well as *incognito.* Whom do you honour with your ſervice now? are you from the wars?

Puff. Piping hot, I aſſure you; fire and ſmoke will tarniſh; a man that will go into ſuch ſervice as I have been in, will find his clothes the worſe for wear, take my word for it: but how is it with you, friend Jaſper? What, you ſtill ſerve, I ſee? you live at that houſe, I ſuppoſe?

Jaſp. I do not abſolutely live, but I am moſt of my time there; I have within theſe two months entered into the ſervice of an old gentleman, who hired a reputable ſervant, and dreſſed him as you ſee, becauſe he has taken it into his head to fall in love.

Puff. Falſe appetite and ſecond childhood! but prithee, what is the object of his paſſion?

Jaſp. No leſs than a virgin of ſixteen, I aſſure you.

Puff. Oh, the toothleſs old dotard!

Jaſp. And he mumbles and plays with her till his mouth waters; then he chuckles till he cries, and calls it his Bid, and his Bidſy, and is ſo fooliſhly fond——

Puff. Bidſy! what is that?——

Jaſp. ——Her name is Biddy.

Puff. Biddy! what miſs Biddy Bellair?

Jaſp. —The ſame——

Puff. I have no luck, to be ſure. [*Aſide.*]—— oh! I have heard of her; ſhe is of a pretty good family, and has ſome fortune, I know. But are things ſettled? is the marriage fixed?

Jaſp. Not abſolutely; the girl, I believe, deteſts him; but her aunt, a very good prudent old lady, has given her conſent, if he can gain her niece's; how it will end I cannot tell—but I am hot upon it myſelf.

Puff. —The devil! not marriage, I hope.

Jaſp. That is not yet determined.

Puff. Who is the lady, pray?

Jaſp. A maid in the ſame family, a woman of honour, I aſſure you; ſhe has one huſband already, a ſcoundrel ſort of a fellow that has run away from her, and liſted for a ſoldier; ſo towards the end of the campaign ſhe hopes to have a certificate he is knocked on the head; if not, I ſuppoſe, we ſhall ſettle matters another way.

Puff. Well, ſpeed the plough.—But hark ye, conſummate without the certificate if you can—keep your neck out of the collar—do—I have wore it theſe two years, and damnably galled I am——

Jaſp. I will take your advice; but I muſt run away to my maſter, who will be impatient for an anſwer to his meſſage which I have juſt delivered to the young lady; ſo dear Mr. Puff, I am your moſt obedient humble ſervant.

Puff. And I muſt to our agent's for my arrears: if you have an hour to ſpare, you will hear of me at George's or the Tilt-Yard——*au revoir* as we ſay abroad. [*Exit* Jaſper.] Thus we are as civil and as falſe as our betters; Jaſper and I were always the *beau monde* exactly; we ever hated one another heartily, yet always kiſs, and ſhake hands—but now to my maſter, with a head full of news, and a heart full of joy! [*Going, ſtarts.*

Angels, and miniſters of grace, defend me!
It can't be! by heav'ns, it is, that fretful porcupine, my wife! I cannot ſtand it; what ſhall I do? I will try to avoid her.

Enter Tag.

Tag. It muſt be he! I will ſwear to the rogue at a mile's diſtance; he either has not ſeen me, or will not know me; if I can keep my temper I will try him farther.

Puff. I ſweat—I tremble—ſhe comes upon me!

Tag. Pray, good Sir, if I may be ſo bold——

Puff. I have nothing for you, good woman, do not trouble me.

Tag. If your honour pleaſes to look this way——

Puff. The kingdom is over-run with beggars; I ſuppoſe

the laſt I gave to has ſent this; but I have no more looſe ſilver about me; ſo prithee, woman, do not diſturb me.

Tag. I can hold no longer; oh you villain, you! where have you been, ſcoundrel? do you know me now, varlet? [*Seizes him.*

Puff. Here, watch, watch,—zounds, I ſhall have my pockets picked.

Tag. Own me this minute, hang dog, and confeſs every thing, or by the rage of an injured woman, I will raiſe the neighbourhood, throttle you, and ſend you to Newgate.

Puff. Amazement! what, my own dear Tag! come to my arms, and let me preſs you to my heart, that pants for thee, and only thee, my true and lawful wife.—Now my ſtars have over-paid me for the fatigue and dangers of the field; I have wandered about like Ulyſſes in ſearch of faithful Penelope, and the gods have brought me to this happy ſpot. [*Embraces her.*

Tag. The fellow is cracked for certain! leave your bombaſtic ſtuff, and tell me, raſcal, why you left me, and where you have been theſe ſix months, heh?

Puff. We will reſerve my adventures for our happy winter evenings—I ſhall only tell you now, that my heart beats ſo ſtrong in my country's cauſe, and being inſtigated either by honour or the devil, (I cannot tell which) I ſet out for Flanders to gather laurels, and lay them at thy feet.

Tag. You left me to ſtarve, villain, and beg my bread, you did ſo.

Puff. I left you too haſtily I muſt confeſs, and often has my conſcience ſtung me for it.——I am got into an officer's ſervice, have been in ſeveral actions, gained ſome credit by my behaviour, and am now returned with my maſter to indulge the gentler paſſions.

Tag. Do not think to fob me off with this nonſenſical talk; what have you brought me home beſides?

Puff. Honour and immoderate love.

Tag. I could tear your eyes out.

Puff. Temperance, or I walk off.

Tag. Temperance, traitor, temperance! what can you ſay for yourſelf? leave me to the world —

Puff. Well, I have been in the wide world too, have not I? what would the woman have?

Tag. Reduce me to the neceſſity of going to ſervice! [*Cries.*

Puff. Why, I am in ſervice too, your lord and maſter, am

not I, you ſaucy jade, you?—come, where doſt live, hereabouts? haſt got good vails? doſt go to market? come, give me a kiſs, darling, and tell me where I ſhall pay my duty to thee.

Tag. Why, there I live at that houſe.

[*Pointing to the houſe* Jaſper *came out of.*

Puff. What there! that houſe?

Tag. Yes, there, that houſe.

Puff. Huzza! we're made for ever, you ſlut, you! huzza! every thing conſpires this day to make me happy — prepare for an inundation of joy! my maſter is in love with your miſs Biddy over head and ears, and ſhe with him: I know ſhe is courted by ſome old fumbler, and her aunt is not againſt the match; but now we are come, the town will be relieved, and the governor brought over; in plain Engliſh, our fortune is made; my maſter muſt marry the lady, and the old gentleman may go to the devil.

Tag. Heyday! what is all this?

Puff. Say no more, the dice are thrown, doublets for us; away to your young miſtreſs, while I run to my maſter, tell her Rhodophil! Rhodophil! will be with her immediately; then if her blood does not mount to her face like quickſilver in a weather glaſs, and point to extreme hot, believe the whole a lie, and your huſband no politician.

Tag. This is news, indeed! I have had the place but a little while, and have not quite got into the ſecrets of the family; but part of your ſtory is true, and if you will bring your maſter, and Miſs is willing, I warrant we will be too hard for the old folks.

Puff. I will about it ſtraight;—but hold, Tag, I had forgot—pray how does Mr. Jaſper do?

Tag. Mr. Jaſper!—what do you mean? I—I—I—

Puff. What, out of countenance, child? oh fy! ſpeak plain, my dear.—And the certificate, when comes that, heh, love?

Tag. He has ſold himſelf and turned conjurer, or he could never have known it. [*Aſide.*

Puff. Are not you a jade?—are not you a Jezebel?—are not you a——

Tag. O ho, temperance! or I walk off—

Puff. I know I am not finiſhed yet, and ſo I am eaſy; but more thanks to my fortune than your virtue, madam.

Aunt. [*Within.*] Tag, Tag, where are you, Tag?

Tag. Coming, madam.——My old lady calls; away, to your maſter, and I will prepare his reception within.

Puff. Shall I bring the certificate with me? [*Exit.*

Tag. Go, you graceleſs rogue, you richly deſerve it. [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to a Chamber.*

Enter Aunt *and* Tag.

Aunt. Who was that man you were talking to, Tag?

Tag. A couſin of mine, madam, that brought me ſome news from my aunt in the country.

Aunt. Where is my niece? why are not you with her?

Tag. She bid me leave her alone — ſhe is ſo melancholy, madam, I do not know what is come to her of late——

Aunt. The thoughtfulneſs that is natural upon the approach of matrimony, generally occaſions a decent concern.

Tag. And do you think, madam, a huſband of threeſcore and five——

Aunt. Hold, Tag, he proteſts to me he is but five and fifty.

Tag. He is a rogue, madam, and an old rogue, which is the worſt of rogues.——

Aunt. Alas! youth or age, it is all one to her; ſhe is all ſimplicity without experience: I would not force her inclinations, but ſhe is ſo innocent ſhe will not know the difference—

Tag. Innocent! never truſt to that, madam; I was innocent myſelf once, but *live and learn* is an old ſaying, and a true one:——I believe, madam, no body is more innocent than yourſelf, and a good maid you are to be ſure, but though you really do not *know* the difference, yet you can *fanſy* it I warrant you.

Aunt. I ſhould prefer a large jointure to a ſmall one, and that is all; but it is impoſſible that Biddy ſhould have deſires, ſhe is but newly come out of the country, and juſt turned of ſixteen.

Tag. That is a tickliſh age, madam! I have obſerved ſhe does not eat, nor ſhe does not ſleep; ſhe ſighs, and ſhe cries, and ſhe loves moon-light; theſe, I take it, are very ſtrong ſymptoms.

Aunt. They are very unaccountable, I muſt confeſs; but you talk from a depraved mind, Tag, her's is ſimple and untainted.

Tag. She will make him a cuckold though for all that, if you force her to marry him.

Aunt. You ſhock me, Tag, with your coarſe expreſſions; I tell you, her chaſtity will be her guard, let her huſband be what he will.

Tag. Chaſtity! never truſt to that, madam; get her a huſband that is fit for her, and I will be bound for her virtue; but with ſuch an one as Sir Simon, I am a rogue if I would anſwer for my own.

Aunt. Well, Tag, the child ſhall never have reaſon to repent of my ſeverity; I was going before to my lawyers to ſpeak about the articles of marriage, I will now put a ſtop to them for ſome time, till we can make farther diſcoveries.

Tag. Heaven will bleſs you for your goodneſs; look where the poor bird comes, quite moped and melancholy; I will ſet my pump at work, and draw ſomething from her before your return, I warrant you. [*Exit* Aunt.] There goes a miracle; ſhe has neither pride, envy, or ill-nature, and yet is near ſixty, and a virgin.

Enter Biddy.

Biddy. How unfortunate a poor girl am I, I dare not tell my ſecrets to any body, and if I do not I am undone—— heigho! [*Sighs.*] pray, Tag, is my aunt gone to her lawyer about me? heigho!

Tag. What is that ſigh for, my dear young miſtreſs?

Biddy. I did not ſigh, not I—[*Sighs.*]

Tag. Nay never gulp them down, they are the worſt things you can ſwallow. There is ſomething in that little heart of yours, that ſwells it and puffs it, and will burſt it at laſt, if you do not give it vent.

Biddy. What would you have me tell you? [*Sighs.*]

Tag. Come, come, you are afraid I will betray you, but you had as good ſpeak, I may do you ſome ſervice you little think of.

Biddy. It is not in your power, Tag, to give me what I want [*Sighs.*]

Tag. Not directly, perhaps; but I may be the means of helping you to it; as for example—if you ſhould not like to marry the old man your aunt deſigns for you, one may find a way to break——

Biddy. His neck, Tag?

Tag. Or the match; either will do, child.

Biddy. I do not care which indeed, ſo I was clear of him ——I do not think I am fit to be married.

Tag. To him you mean——you have no objection to marriage, but the man, and I applaud you for it: but come, courage, miſs, never keep it in; out with it all——

Biddy. If you will aſk me any queſtions I will anſwer them, but I cannot tell you any thing of myſelf, I ſhall bluſh if I do.

Tag. Well then——In the firſt place pray tell me, miſs Biddy Bellair, if you do not like ſomebody better than old Sir Simon Loveit?

Biddy. Heigho!

Tag. What's heigho, miſs?

Biddy. When I ſay heigho! it means yes.

Tag. Very well; and this ſomebody is a young, handſome fellow?

Biddy. Heigho!

Tag. And if you were once his, you would be as merry as the beſt of us?

Biddy. Heigho!

Tag. So far ſo good; and ſince I have got you to wet your feet, ſouſe over head at once, and the pain will be over.

Biddy. There——then. [*A long ſigh.*] Now help me out, Tag, as faſt as you can.

Tag. When did you hear from your gallant?

Biddy. Never ſince he went to the army.

Tag. How ſo?

Biddy. I was afraid the letters would fall into my aunt's hands, ſo I would not let him write to me; but I had a better reaſon then.

Tag. Pray let us hear that too.

Biddy. Why, I thought if I ſhould write to him and promiſe him to love no-body elſe, and ſhould afterwards change my mind, he might think I was inconſtant, and call me a coquette.

Tag. What a ſimple innocent it is! [*Aſide.*] And have you changed your mind, miſs?

Biddy. No indeed, Tag, I love him the beſt of any of them.

Tag. Of any of them! why, have you any more?

Biddy. Pray do not aſk me.

Tag. Nay, miſs, if you only truſt me by halves, you cannot expect——

Biddy. I will truſt you with every thing.—When I parted with him, I grew melancholy; ſo in order to divert me, I have let two others court me till he returns again.

Tag. Is that all, my dear? mighty ſimple, indeed. [*Aſide.*

Biddy. One of them is a fine bluſtering man, and is called captain Flaſh: he is always talking of fighting, and wars; he thinks he is ſure of me, but I ſhall balk him; we ſhall ſee him this afternoon, for he preſſed ſtrongly to come, and I have given him leave, while my aunt is taking her afternoon's nap.

Tag. And who is the other, pray?

Biddy. Quite another ſort of a man, he ſpeaks like a lady for all the world, and never ſwears as Mr. Flaſh does, but wears nice white gloves, and tells me what ribbons become my complexion, where to ſtick my patches, who is the beſt millener, where they ſell the beſt tea, and which is the beſt waſh for the face, and the beſt paſte for the hands; he is always playing with my fan, and ſhewing his teeth, and whenever I ſpeak he pats me—ſo—and cries, *The devil take me, Miſs Biddy, but you will be my perdition*—ha, ha, ha!

Tag. Oh the pretty creature! and what do you call him, pray?

Biddy. His name is Fribble; you ſhall ſee him too, for by miſtake I appointed them at the ſame time; but you muſt help me out with them.

Tag. And ſuppoſe your favourite ſhould come too——

Biddy. I ſhould not care what became of the others.

Tag. What is his name?

Biddy. It begins with an R—h—o——

Tag. I will be hanged if it is not Rhodophil.

Biddy. I am frightened at you! you are a witch, Tag!

Tag. I am ſo, and I can tell your fortune too. Look me in the face. The gentleman you love moſt in the world will be at our houſe this afternoon; he arrived from the army this morning, and dies till he ſees you.

Biddy. Is he come, Tag? do not joke with me——

Tag. Not to keep you longer in ſuſpence, you muſt know the ſervant of your Strephon, by ſome unaccountable fate or other, is my lord and maſter; he has juſt been with me, and told me of his maſter's arrival and impatience——

Biddy. Oh my dear, dear Tag, you have put me out of my wits—I am all over in a flutter—I ſhall leap out of my ſkin—I do not know what to do with myſelf—is he come, Tag?

—I am ready to faint—I would give the world I had put on my pink and ſilver robings to-day.

Tag. I aſſure you, miſs, you look charmingly!

Biddy. Do I indeed though! I will put a little patch under my left eye, and powder my hair immediately.

Tag. We will go to dinner firſt, and then I will aſſiſt you.

Biddy. Dinner! I cannot eat a morſel—I do not know what is the matter with me—my ears tingle, my heart beats, my face flushes, and I tremble every joint of me—I muſt run in and look myſelf in the glaſs this moment.

Tag. Yes, ſhe has it, and deeply too; this is no hypocriſy—

Not art, but nature now performs her part,
And every word's the language of the heart.

End of the Firſt Act.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE *continues.*

Enter Captain Loveit, Biddy, Tag, *and* Puff.

Capt. TO find you ſtill conſtant, and to arrive at ſuch a critical juncture, is the height of fortune and happineſs.

Biddy. Nothing ſhall force me from you; and if I am ſecure of your affections——

Puff. I will be bound for him, madam, and give you any ſecurity you can aſk.

Tag. Every thing goes on to our wiſh, Sir; I juſt now had a ſecond conference with my old lady, and ſhe was ſo convinced by my arguments, that ſhe returned inſtantly to the lawyer to forbid the drawing out of any writings at all, and ſhe is determined never to thwart miſs's inclinations, and left it to us to give the old gentleman his diſcharge at the next viſit.

Capt. Shall I undertake the old dragon?

Tag. If we have occaſion for help, we ſhall call for you.

Biddy. I expect him every moment, therefore I will tell you what, Rhodophil, you and your man ſhall be locked up in my bed chamber till we have ſettled matters with the old gentleman.

Capt. Do what you pleaſe with me.

Biddy. You muſt not be impatient though.

Capt. I can undergo any thing with ſuch a reward in view,

one kiſs and I will be quite reſigned—and now ſhew me the way. [*Exeunt.*

Tag. Come, Sirrah, when I have got you under lock and key, I ſhall bring you to reaſon.

Puff. Are your wedding-clothes ready, my dove? the certificate is come.

Tag. Go follow your captain, Sirrah—march—you may thank heaven I had patience to ſtay ſo long.

[*Exeunt* Tag *and* Puff.

Enter Biddy.

Biddy. I was very much alarmed for fear of my two gallants ſhould come in upon us unawares; we ſhould have had ſad work if they had. I find I love Rhodophil vaſtly, for though my other ſparks flatter me more, I cannot abide the thought of them now—I have buſineſs upon my hands enough to turn my little head, but egad my heart is good, and a fig for dangers—let me ſee, what ſhall I do with my two gallants? I muſt, at leaſt, part with them decently; ſuppoſe I ſet them together by the ears?—The luckieſt thought in the world! for if they will not quarrel, as I believe they will not, I can break with them for cowards, and very juſtly diſmiſs them my ſervice; and if they will fight, and one of them ſhould be killed, the other will certainly be hanged or run away, and ſo I ſhall very handſomely get rid of both—I am glad I have ſettled it ſo purely.

Enter Tag.

Well, Tag, are they ſafe?

Tag. I think ſo, the door is double-locked, and I have the key in my pocket.

Biddy. That is pure; but have you given them any thing to divert them?

Tag. I have given the captain one of your old gloves to mumble, but my Strephon is diverting himſelf with the more ſubſtantial comforts of a cold veniſon paſty.

Biddy. What ſhall we do with the next that comes?

Tag. If Mr. Fribble comes firſt, I will clap him up into my lady's ſtore-room; I ſuppoſe he is a great maker of marmalade himſelf, and will have an opportunity of making ſome critical remarks upon our paſty and ſweetmeats.

Biddy. When one of them comes, do you go and watch for the other, and as ſoon as you ſee him, run in to us, and

pretend it is my aunt, and ſo we ſhall have an excuſe to lock him up till we want him.

Tag. You may depend upon me; here is one of them.—

Enter Fribble.

Biddy. Mr. Fribble, your ſervant——

Fribble. Miſs Biddy, your ſlave—I hope I have not come upon you abruptly; I ſhould have waited upon you ſooner, but an accident happened that diſcompoſed me ſo, that I was obliged to go home again to take drops.

Biddy. Indeed you do not look well, Sir.——Go, Tag, and do as I bid you.

Tag. I will, madam. [*Exit.*

Biddy. I have ſet my maid to watch my aunt, that we may not be ſurpriſed by her.

Frib. Your prudence is equal to your beauty, miſs, and I hope your permitting me to kiſs your hands will be no impeachment of your underſtanding.

Biddy. I hate the ſight of him. [*Aſide.*] I was afraid I ſhould not have had the pleaſure of ſeeing you, pray let me know what accident you met with, and what is the matter with your hand? I ſhall not be eaſy till I know.

Frib. Well I vow, miſs Biddy, you are a good *creeter*—— I will endeavour to muſter up what little ſpirits I have, and tell you the whole affair——hem!——But firſt you muſt give me leave to make you a preſent of a ſmall pot of my lip ſalve; my ſervant made it this morning—the ingredients are innocent, I aſſure you; nothing but the beſt virgin-wax, conſerve of roſes, and lilly of the valley water.

Biddy. I thank you, Sir, but my lips are generally red, and when they are not, I bite them.

Frib. I bite my own, ſometimes, to pout them a little, but this will give them a ſoftneſs, colour and an agreeable *moiſter*.—Thus let me make an humble offering at that ſhrine, where I have already ſacrificed my heart. [*Kneels and gives the pot.*

Biddy. Upon my word that is very prettily expreſſed, you are poſitively the beſt company in the world——I wiſh he was out of the houſe. [*Aſide.*

Frib. But to return to my accident, and the reaſon why my hand is in this condition—I beg you will excuſe the appearance of it, and be ſatisfied that nothing but mere neceſſity could have forced me to appear thus muffled before you.

Biddy. I am very willing to excuſe any misfortune that happens to you, Sir.

Frib. You are vaſtly good, indeed—thus it was,—hem!—you muſt know, miſs, there is not an animal in the creation I have ſo great an averſion to, as thoſe hackney coach fellows—As I was coming out of my lodgings,—ſays one of them to me, *Would your honour have a coach?*—No, man, ſaid I, not now (with all the civility imaginable)—*I will carry you and your doll too*, ſays he, *miſs Margery for the ſame price.*—Upon which the maſculine beaſts about us fell a laughing; then I turned round in a great paſſion, curſe me, ſays I, fellow, but I will trounce thee.——And, as I was holding out my hand in a threatning *poſture*,—thus;—he makes a cut at me with his whip, and ſtriking me over the nail of the little finger, it gave me ſuch exquiſite *torter* that I fainted away; and while I was in this condition, the mob picked my pocket of my purſe, my ſciſſars, my *Mocoa* ſmelling-bottle, and my huſwife.

Biddy. I ſhall laugh in his face. [*Aſide.*] I am afraid you are in great pain; pray ſit down, Mr. Fribble, but I hope your hand is in no danger. [*They ſit.*

Frib. Not in the leaſt, maam; pray do not be apprehenſive——a milk-poultice, and a gentle ſweat to night, with a little manna in the morning, I am confident, will relieve me entirely.

Biddy. But pray, Mr. Fribble, do you make uſe of a huſwife.

Frib. I cannot do without it, maam; there is a club of us, all young bachelors, the ſweeteſt ſociety in the world; and we meet three times a week at each other's lodgings, where we drink tea, hear the chat of the day, invent faſhions for the ladies, make models of them, and cut out patterns in paper. We were the firſt inventors of knotting, and this fringe is the original produce and joint labour of our little community.

Biddy. And who are your pretty ſet, pray?

Frib. There is Phil Whiffle, Jacky Wagtail, my lord Trip, Billy Dimple, Sir Dilbery Diddle, and your humble——

Biddy. What a ſweet collection of happy creatures!

Frib. Indeed and ſo we are, miſs,——but a prodigious *fracas* diſconcerted us ſome time ago at Billy Dimple's——three drunken naughty women of the town burſt into our club-

room, curſt us all, threw down the china, broke ſix looking-glaſſes, ſcalded us with the ſlop-baſon, and *ſcrat* poor Phil Whiffle's cheek in ſuch a manner, that he has kept his bed theſe three weeks.

Biddy. Indeed, Mr. Fribble, I think all our ſex have great reaſon to be angry; for if you are ſo happy now you are bachelors, the ladies may wiſh and ſigh to very little purpoſe.

Frib. You are miſtaken, I aſſure you; I am prodigiouſly rallied about my paſſion for you, I can tell you that, and am looked upon as loſt to our ſociety already; he, he, he!

Biddy. Pray, Mr. Fribble, now you have gone ſo far, do not think me imprudent if I long to know how you intend to uſe the lady who ſhall be honoured with your affections?

Frib. Not as moſt other wives are uſed, I aſſure you; all the domeſtic buſineſs will be taken off her hands; I ſhall make the tea, comb the dogs, and dreſs the children myſelf, ſo that though I am a commoner, Mrs. Fribble will lead the life of a woman of quality; for ſhe will have nothing to do, but lie in bed, play at cards, and ſcold the ſervants.

Biddy. What a happy creature ſhe muſt be!

Frib. Do you really think ſo! Then pray let me have a little *ſerious* talk with you.——Though my paſſion is not of a long ſtanding, I hope the ſincerity of my intentions——

Biddy. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. Go, you wild thing. [*Pats her.*] The devil take me but there is no talking to you.——How can you uſe me in this barbarous manner! if I had the conſtitution of an alderman it would ſink under my ſufferings.——*hooman nater* cannot ſupport it.——

Biddy. Why, what would you do with me, Mr. Fribble?

Frib. Well, I vow I will beat you if you talk ſo——do not look at me in that manner—fleſh and blood cannot bear it——I could—but I will not grow indecent——

Biddy. But pray, Sir, where are the verſes you were to write upon me? I find if a young lady depends too much upon ſuch fine gentlemen as you, ſhe ſhall certainly be diſappointed.

Frib. I vow, the flutter I was put into this afternoon has quite turned my ſenſes——here they are though——and I believe you will like them.——

Biddy. There can be no doubt of it. [*Curtſeys.*

Frib. I proteſt, miſs, I do not like that curtſey—look at me, and always riſe in this manner. [*Shews her.*] But, my dear

creeter, who put on your cap to day? they have made a fright of you, and it is as yellow as old lady Crowfoot's neck.—— When we are ſettled, I will dreſs your heads myſelf.

Biddy. Pray read the verſes to me Mr. Fribble.

Frib. I obey——hem!——William Fribble, Eſq; to miſs Biddy Bellair—greeſing.

No ice ſo hard, ſo cold as I,
Till warm'd and ſoften'd by your eye;
And now my heart diſſolves away
In dreams by night, in ſighs by day;
No brutal paſſion fires my breaſt,
Which loaths the object when poſſeſs'd;
But one of harmleſs, gentle kind,
Whoſe joys are center'd——in the mind:
Then take with me, love's better part,
His downy wing, but not his dart.

How do you like them?

Biddy. Ha, ha, ha! I ſwear they are very pretty—but I do not quite underſtand them.

Frib. Theſe light pieces are never ſo well underſtood in reading as ſinging; I have ſet them myſelf, and will endeavour to give them you——*La la*——I have an abominable cold, and cannot ſing a note; however the tune is nothing, the manner is all.

No ice ſo hard, &c. [Sings.]

Enter Tag, *running*.

Tag. Your aunt, your aunt, your aunt, madam!

Frib. What is the matter?

Biddy. Hide, hide Mr. Fribble, Tag, or we are ruined.

Frib. Oh! for heaven's ſake, put me any where, ſo I do not dirty my clothes.

Biddy. Put him into the ſtore-room, Tag, this moment.

Frib. Is it a damp place, Mrs. Tag? the floor is boarded, I hope?

Tag. Indeed it is not, Sir.

Frib. What ſhall I do? I ſhall certainly catch my death! Where is my cambric handkerchief, and my ſalts? I ſhall certainly have my hyſterics! [*Runs in.*

Biddy. In, in, in——So now let the other come as ſoon

as he will; I did not care if I had twenty of them, ſo they would but come one after another.

Enter Tag.

Was my aunt coming?

Tag. No, it was Mr. Flaſh, I ſuppoſe by the length of his ſtride, and the cock of his hat. He will be here this minute.——What ſhall we do with him?

Biddy. I will manage him, I warrant you, and try his courage; be ſure you are ready to ſecond me—we ſhall have pure ſport.

Tag. Huſh! here he comes.

Enter Flaſh *ſinging*.

Flaſh. Well my bloſſom, here am I! what hopes for a poor dog, eh? how! the maid here! then I have loſt the town, dammee! not a ſhilling to bribe the governor; ſhe will ſpring a mine, and I ſhall be blown to the devil. [*Aſide.*

Biddy. Do not be aſhamed, Mr. Flaſh; I have told Tag the whole affair, and ſhe is my friend I can aſſure you.

Flaſh. Is ſhe? Then ſhe will not be mine I am certain. [*Aſide.*] Well, Mrs. Tag, you know, I ſuppoſe, what is to be done: this young lady and I have contracted ourſelves, and ſo, if you pleaſe to ſtand bride-maid, why we will fix the wedding-day directly.

Tag. The wedding day, Sir?

Flaſh. The wedding day, Sir? Ay, Sir, the wedding day, Sir, what have you to ſay to that, Sir?

Biddy. My dear captain Flaſh, do not make ſuch a noiſe, you will wake my aunt.

Flaſh. And ſuppoſe I did, child, what then?

Biddy. She would be frightened out of her wits.

Flaſh. At me, miſs! frightened at me? *tout a contraire*, I aſſure you; you miſtake the thing, child; I have ſome reaſon to believe I am not quite ſo ſhocking. [*Affectedly.*

Tag. Indeed, Sir, you flatter yourſelf—but pray, Sir, what are your pretenſions?

Flaſh. The lady's promiſes, my own paſſion, and the beſt mounted blade in the three kingdoms. If any man can produce a better title, let him take her; if not, the d—l mince me, if I give up an atom of her.

Biddy. He is in a fine paſſion, if he would but hold it.

Tag. Pray, Sir, hear reaſon a little.

Flaſh. I never do, madam; it is not my method of pro-

ceeding; here is my logic! [*Draws his ſword.*] Sa, ſa,——my beſt argument is cart over arm, madam, ha, ha, [*lunges.*] and if he anſwers that, madam, through my ſmall guts, my breath, blood and miſtreſs are all at his ſervice—— nothing more, madam.

Biddy. This'll do, this'll do.

Tag. But Sir, Sir, Sir?

Flaſh. But madam, madam, madam: I profeſs blood, madam, I was bred up to it from a child; I ſtudy the book of fate, and the camp is my univerſity; I have attended the lectures of prince Charles upon the Rhine, and Bathiani upon the Po, and have extracted knowlege from the mouth of a cannon; I am not to be frightened with ſquibs, madam, no, no.

Biddy. Pray, dear Sir, do not mind her, but let me prevail with you to go away this time——your paſſion is very fine to be ſure, and when my Aunt and Tag are out of the way. I will let you know when I would have you come again.

Flaſh. When you would have me come again, child? and ſuppoſe I never would come again, what do you think of that now, ha? you pretend to be afraid of your aunt; your aunt knows what's what too well to refuſe a good match when it is offered——Lookee, miſs, I am a man of honour, glory is my aim, I have told you the road I am in, and do you ſee here, child, [*ſhewing his ſword.*] no tricks upon travellers.

Biddy. But pray, Sir, hear me.

Flaſh. No, no, no, I know the world, madam; I am as well known at Covent-Garden as the dial, madam: I will break a lamp, bully a conſtable, bam a juſtice, or bilk a box-keeper with any man in the liberties of Weſtminſter; what do you think of me now, madam?

Biddy. Pray don't be ſo furious, Sir.

Flaſh. Come, come, come, few words are beſt, ſomebody is happier than ſomebody, and I am a poor ſilly fellow; ha, ha,——That is all——look you, child, to be ſhort, (for I am a man of reflection) I have but a *bagatelle* to ſay to you: I am in love with you up to hell and deſperation, may the ſky cruſh me if I am not——but ſince there is another more fortunate than I, adieu, Biddy, proſperity to the happy rival, patience to poor Flaſh; but the firſt time we meet——gunpowder be my perdition, but I will have the honour to cut a throat with him. [*Going.*

Biddy. [*Stopping him.*] You may meet with him now if you pleaſe.

Flaſh. Now, may I!——where is he? I will ſacrifice the villain. [*Aloud.*

Tag. Huſh! he is but in the next room.

Flaſh. Is he; ram me [*low.*] into a mortar-piece, but I will have vengeance; my blood boils to be at him—— do not be frighten'd, miſs?

Biddy. No, Sir, I never was better pleaſed, I aſſure you.

Flaſh. I ſhall ſoon do his buſineſs.

Biddy. As ſoon as you pleaſe, take your own time.

Tag. I will fetch the gentleman to you immediately. [*Going.*

Flaſh. [*Stopping her.*] Stay, ſtay a little; what a paſſion I am in?——are you ſure he is in the next room?——I ſhall certainly tear him to pieces——I would fain murder him like a gentleman too——beſides, this family ſhall not be brought into trouble upon my account.——I have it——I will watch for him in the ſtreet, and mix his blood with the puddle of next kennel. [*Going.*

Biddy. [*Stopping him.*] No, pray, Mr. Flaſh, let me ſee the battle, I ſhall be glad to ſee you fight for me, you ſhall not go, indeed. [*Holding him.*

Tag. [*Holding him.*] Oh, pray let me ſee you fight; there were two gentlemen *fit* yeſterday, and my miſtreſs was never ſo diverted in her life—I will fetch him out. [*Exit.*

Biddy. Do, ſtick him, ſtick him, captain Flaſh; I ſhall love you better for it.

Flaſh. D——n your love, I wiſh I was out of the houſe. [*Aſide.*

Biddy. Here he is——now ſpeak ſome of your hard words, and run him through——

Flaſh. Don't be in fits now—— [*Aſide to* Biddy.

Biddy. Never fear me.

Enter Tag *and* Fribble.

Tag. [*To* Fribble.] Take it on my word, Sir, he is a bully, and nothing elſe.

Frib. [*Frightened.*] I know you are my good friend, but perhaps you do not know his diſpoſition.

Tag. I am a confident he is a coward.

Frib. Is he? nay, then I am his man.

Flaſh. I like his looks, but I will not venture too far at firſt.

Tag. Speak to him, Sir.

Frib. I will——I underſtand, Sir——hem—that—you—by Mrs. Tag here,——Sir,——who hath informed me—hem—that you have ſent her to inform me—Sir,——that you would be glad to ſpeak with me—demme—— [*Turns off.*

Flaſh. I can ſpeak to you, Sir—or to any body, Sir—or I can let it alone and hold my tongue,——if I ſee occaſion, Sir, demme—— [*Turns off.*

Biddy. Well ſaid, Mr. Flaſh, be in a paſſion.

Tag. [*To* Fribble.] Do not mind his looks, he changes colour already; to him, to him. [*Puſhes him.*

Frib. Do not hurry me, Mrs. Tag, for heaven's ſake! I ſhall be out of breath before I begin if you do,—Sir,——[*To* Flaſh.] if you cannot ſpeak to a gentleman in another manner, Sir,——why then I will venture to ſay, you had better hold your tongue——oons.

Flaſh. Sir, you and I are of different opinions.

Frib. You and your opinion may go to the devil——take that. [*Turns off to* Tag.

Tag. Well ſaid, Sir, the day's your own.

Biddy. What's the matter, Mr. Flaſh? is all your fury gone? do you give me up?

Frib. I have done his buſineſs. [*Struts about.*

Flaſh. Give you up, madam! no, madam; when I am determined in my reſolutions I am always calm; it is our way, madam; and now I ſhall proceed to buſineſs.——Sir, I beg to ſay to you a word in private.

Frib. Keep your diſtance, fellow, and I'll anſwer you,——that lady has confeſſed a paſſion for me, and as ſhe has delivered up her heart into my keeping, nothing but my 'arts blood ſhall purchaſe it. Damnation!

Tag. Bravo! Bravo!

Flaſh. If thoſe are the conditions, I will give you earneſt for it directly. [*Draws.*] Now, villain, renounce all right and title this minute, or the torrent of my rage will overflow my reaſon, and I ſhall annihilate the nothingneſs of your ſoul and body in an inſtant.

Frib. I wiſh there was a conſtable at hand to take us both up; we ſhall certainly do one another a prejudice.

Tag. No you won't indeed, Sir; pray bear up to him;

if you would but draw your ſword, and be in a paſſion, he would run away directly.

Frib. Will he? [*Draws his ſword.*] Then I can no longer contain myſelf——hell and the furies! come on, thou ſavage brute.

Tag. Go on, Sir.

[*Here they ſtand in fighting poſtures, while* Biddy *and* Tag *puſh them forward.*

Flaſh. Come on.

Biddy. Go on.

Frib. Come on, raſcal.

Tag. Go on, Sir.

Enter captain Loveit *and* Puff.

Capt. What's the matter, my dear?

Biddy. If you won't fight, here is one that will. Oh Rhodophil, theſe two ſparks are your rivals, and have peſtered me theſe two months with their addreſſes; they have forced themſelves into the houſe, and have been quarrelling about me, and diſturbing the family; if they won't fight, pray kick them out of the houſe.

Capt. What's the matter, gentlemen?

[*They both keep their fencing poſture.*

Flaſh. Don't part us, Sir.

Frib. No, pray Sir, do not part us, we ſhall do you a miſchief.

Capt. Puff, look to the other gentleman, and call a ſurgeon.

Biddy *and* Tag. Ha, ha, ha!

Puff. Bleſs me! how can you ſtand under your wounds, Sir?

Frib. Am I hurt, Sir?

Puff. Hurt, Sir! why you have—let me ſee——pray ſtand in the light—one, two, three, through the heart; and let me ſee——hum——eight through the ſmall guts! come, Sir, make it up a round dozen! and then we will part you.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Capt. Come here, Puff. [*Whiſpers and looks at* Flaſh.

Puff. It is the very ſame, Sir.

Capt. [*To* Flaſh.] Pray, Sir, have not I had the pleaſure of ſeeing your face abroad?

Flaſh. I have ſerved abroad.

Capt. Had not you the misfortune, Sir, to be miſſing at the laſt engagement in Flanders?

Flaſh. I was found among the dead in the field of battle.

Puff. He was the firſt that fell, Sir; the wind of a cannon-ball ſtruck him flat upon his face; he had juſt ſtrength enough to creep into a ditch, and there he was found after the battle in a moſt deplorable condition.

Capt. Pray, Sir, what advancement did you get by the ſervice of that day?

Flaſh. My wounds render'd me unfit for ſervice, and I ſold out.

Puff. Stole out, you mean.—We hunted him by ſcent, to the water-ſide, thence he took ſhipping for England, and, taking the advantage of my maſter's abſence, has attacked his citadel, which we are luckily come to relieve, and drive his honour into the ditch again.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. He, he, he!

Capt. And now, Sir, how have you dared to ſhew your face again in open day, or wear even the outſide of a profeſſion you have ſo much ſcandalized by your behaviour? I honour the name of ſoldier, and as a party concerned am bound not to ſee it diſgraced; as you have forfeited your title to honour, deliver up your ſword this inſtant.

Flaſh. Nay good captain——

Capt. No words, Sir. [*Takes his ſword.*

Frib. He is a ſad ſcoundrel; I wiſh I had kicked him.

Capt. The next thing I command——leave this houſe, change the colour of your clothes and fierceneſs of your looks, appear from top to toe the wretch, the very wretch thou art; if e'er I meet thee in the military dreſs again, or if you put on looks that belye the native baſeneſs of thy heart, be it where it will, this ſhall be the reward of thy impudence and diſobedience. [*Kicks him, he runs off.*

Biddy. Oh my dear Rhodophil!

Frib. What an infamous raſcal it is! I thank you, Sir, for this favour; but I muſt after and cane him.

[*Going, is ſtopt by the* Captain.

Capt. One word with you too, Sir.

Frib. With me, Sir?

Capt. You need not tremble, I ſhall not uſe you roughly.

Frib. I am certain of that, Sir; but I am ſadly troubl'd with weak nerves.

Capt. Thou art of a ſpecies too deſpicable for correction;

therefore be gone, and if I ſee you here again, your inſignificacy ſhall not protect you.

Frib. I am oblig'd to you for your kindneſs; well, if ever I have any thing to do with intrigues again!—— [*Exit.*

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Puff. Shall I eaſe you of your trophy, Sir?

Capt. Take it, Puff, as ſome ſmall recompence for thy fidelity, thou canſt better uſe it than its owner.

Puff. I wiſh your honour had a patent to take ſuch trifles from every pretty gentleman that could ſpare them; I would ſet up the largeſt cutler's ſhop in the kingdom.

Capt. Well ſaid, Puff.

Biddy. But pray, Mr. Fox, how did you get out of your hole? I thought you was locked in?

Capt. I ſhot the bolt back when I heard a noiſe; and thinking you were in danger, I broke my confinement without any conſideration than your ſafety. [*Kiſſes her hand.*

Sir Sim. [*Without.*] Biddy, Biddy, why Tag, Tag.

Biddy. There's the old gentleman; run in, run in.

[*Exeunt* Captain *and* Puff. Tag *opens the door.*

Enter Sir Simon *and* Jaſper.

Sir Sim. Where have you been, Biddy, Jaſper and I have knocked and called as loud and as long as we were able: what were you doing, child?

Biddy. I was reading part of a play to Tag, and we came as ſoon as we heard you.

Sir Sim. What play, moppet?

Biddy. The Old Bachelor; and we were juſt got to old Nykyn as you knocked at the door.

Sir Sim. I muſt have you burn your plays and romances now you are mine; they corrupt your innocence; and what can you learn from them?

Biddy. What you can't teach me, I am ſure.

Sir Sim. Fy, fy, child; I never heard you talk at this rate before; I am afraid, Tag, you put theſe things into her head.

Tag. I, Sir! I vow, Sir Simon, ſhe knows more than you can conceive; ſhe ſurpriſes me, I aſſure you, though I have been married theſe two years, and lived with bachelors the moſt part of my life.

Sir Sim. Do you hear, Jaſper? I am all over in a ſweat,—

Pray, miſs, have not you had company this afternoon? I ſaw a young fop go out of the houſe as I was coming hither.

Biddy. You might have ſeen two, Sir Simon, if your eyes had been good.

Sir Sim. Do you hear, Jaſper?—Sure the child is poſſeſſed —Pray, miſs, what did they want here?

Biddy. Me, Sir; they wanted me.

Sir Sim. What did they want with you, I ſay?

Biddy. Why, what do you want with me?

Sir Sim. Do you hear, Jaſper—I am thunder-ſtruck! I cannot believe my own ears!—tell me the reaſon, I ſay, why——

Tag. I will tell you the reaſon why, if you pleaſe, Sir Simon. Miſs, you know, is a very ſilly young girl, and having found out (heaven knows how!) that there is ſome little difference between ſixty-five and twenty-five, ſhe is ridiculous enough to chooſe the latter; when if ſhe'd take my advice——

Sir Sim. You are right, Tag, ſhe would take me? eh?

Tag. Yes, Sir, as the only way to have both; for if ſhe marries you, the other will follow of courſe.

Sir Sim. Do you hear, Jaſper?

Biddy. It is very true, Sir Simon; from my knowing no better, I have ſet my heart upon a young man, and a young one I'll have; there have been three here this afternoon.

Sir Sim. Three, Jaſper!

Biddy. And they have been quarrelling about me, and one has beat the other two. Now Sir Simon, if you will take up the conqueror, and kick him, as he has kicked the others, you ſhall have me for your reward, and my fifteen thouſand pounds into the bargain. What ſays my hero? eh?

[*Slaps him on the back.*

Sir Sim. The world is at an end!—what is to be done, Jaſper?

Jaſp. Pack up and be gone; do not fight the match, Sir.

Sir Sim. Fleſh and blood cannot bear it——I am all over agitation——Hugh, hugh!——am I cheated by a baby, a doll? where is your aunt, you young cockatrice?——I will let her know——ſhe is a baſe woman, and you are——

Biddy. You are in a fine humour to ſhow your valour. Tag, fetch the captain this minute, while Sir Simon is warm, and let him know he is waiting here to cut his throat. [*Exit Tag.*] I locked him up in my bed-chamber till you came.

Sir Sim. Here's an imp of darkneſs! what would I give

that my ſon Bob was here to thraſh her ſpark, while I—— raviſhed the reſt of the family.

Jaſp. I believe we had beſt retire, Sir.

Sir Sim. No, no, I muſt ſee her bully firſt; and, do you hear, Jaſper, if I put him in a paſſion, do you knock him down.

Jaſp. Pray keep your temper, Sir.

Enter Captain, Tag, *and* Puff.

Capt. [*Approaching angrily.*] What is the meaning, Sir?—ounds! it is my father, Puff; what ſhall I do? [*Aſide.*

Puff. [*Drawing him by the coat.*] Kennel again, Sir.

Sir Sim. I am enchanted! [*Staring.*

Capt. There's no retreat, I muſt ſtand it!

Biddy. What is all this?

Sir Sim. Your humble ſervant, captain Fire-Ball——You are welcome from the wars, noble captain.—I did not think I ſhould have the pleaſure of being knock'd on the head, or cut up alive by ſo fine a gentleman.

Capt. I am under ſuch confuſion, Sir, I have not power to convince you of my innocence.

Sir Sim. Innocence! pretty lamb! and ſo, Sir, you have left the regiment, and the honourable employment of fighting for your country, to come home and cut your father's throat; why you will be a great man in time, Bob!

Biddy. His father, Tag!

Sir Sim. Come, come, it is ſoon done——one ſtroke does it—or, if you have any qualms, let your 'ſquire there perform the operation.

Puff. Pray, Sir, do not throw ſuch temptations in my way.

Capt. Hold your impudent tongue!

Sir Sim. Why do not you ſpeak, Mr. Modeſty; what excuſe have you for leaving the army, I ſay?

Capt. My affection to this lady.

Sir Sim. Your affection, puppy!

Capt. Our love, Sir, has been long and mutual; what accidents have happened ſince my going abroad, and her leaving the country, and how I have moſt unaccountably met you here, I am a ſtranger to; but whatever appearances may be, I ſtill am, and ever was, your dutiful ſon.

Biddy. He talks like an angel, Tag!

Sir Sim. Dutiful, ſirrah? have you not rival'd your father?

Capt. No, Sir, you have rival'd me; my claim muſt be prior to yours.

Biddy. Indeed, Sir Simon, he can ſhew the beſt title to me.

Jaſp. Sir, Sir, the young gentleman ſpeaks well, and as the fortune will not go out of the family, I would adviſe you to drop your reſentment, be reconciled to your ſon, and relinquiſh the lady.

Sir Sim. Ay, ay, with all my heart——Look ye, ſon, I give you up the girl, ſhe is too much for me, I confeſs;——and take my word, Bob, you will catch a Tartar.

Biddy. I aſſure you, Sir Simon, I am not the perſon you take me for; if I have uſed you any ways ill, it was for your ſon's ſake, who had my promiſe and inclinations before you; and though I believe I ſhould have made you a moſt uncomfortable wife, I will be the beſt daughter to you in the world; and if you ſtand in need of a lady, my aunt is diſengaged, and is the beſt nurſe.

Sir Sim. No, no, I thank you, child; you have ſo turn'd my ſtomach to marriage, I have no appetite left——but where is this aunt? won't ſhe ſtop your proceedings, think you?

Tag. She is now at her lawyer's, Sir, and if you pleaſe to go with the young couple, and give your approbation, I will anſwer for my old lady's conſent.

Biddy. The captain, and I, Sir——

Sir Sim. Come, come, Bob, you are but an enſign, do not impoſe on the girl neither.

Capt. I had the good fortune, Sir, to pleaſe my royal general by my behaviour in a ſmall action with the enemy, and he gave me a company.

Sir Sim. Bob! I wiſh you joy! this is news indeed! and when we celebrate your wedding, ſon, I will drink a half pint bumper myſelf to your benefactor.

Capt. And he deſerves it, Sir; ſuch a general, by his example and juſtice, animates us to deeds of glory, and inſures us conqueſt.

Sir Sim. Right, my boy——come along then. [*Going.*

Puff. Halt a little, gentlemen and ladies, if you pleaſe: every body here ſeems well ſatisfied but myſelf.

Capt. What's the matter, Puff?

Puff. Sir, as I would make myſelf worthy of ſuch a maſter, and the name of ſoldier, I can't put up the leaſt injury to my honour.

Sir Sim. Heyday! what flouriſhes are theſe?

Puff. Here's the man; come forth, caitiff. [*To* Jaſper.] He hath confeſs'd this day, that, in my abſence he had taken freedoms with my lawful wife, and had diſhonourable intentions againſt my bed; for which I demand ſatisfaction.——

Sir Sim [*Striking him.*] What ſtuff is here, the fellow's brain's turn'd.

Puff. And crack'd too, Sir; but you are my maſter's father, and I ſubmit.

Capt. Come, come, I'll ſettle your punctilios, and will take care of you and Tag hereafter, provided you drop all animoſities, and ſhake hands this moment.

Puff. My revenge gives way to my intereſt, and I once again, Jaſper, take you to my boſom.

Jaſp. I am your friend again, Puff—but harkye—I fear you not; and if you will lay aſide your ſteel there, as far as a broken head, or a black eye, I am at your ſervice upon demand.

Tag. You are very good at crowing indeed, Mr. Jaſper; but let me tell you, the fool that is rogue enough to brag of a woman's favours, muſt be a dunghill every way—As for you, my dear huſband, ſhew your manhood in a proper place, and you need not fear theſe ſheep-biters.

Sir Sim. The Abigail is pleaſant I confeſs, he, he!

Biddy. I am afraid the town will be ill-natur'd enough to think I have been a little coquettiſh in my behaviour; but, I hope, as I have been conſtant to the Captain, I ſhall be excus'd diverting myſelf with pretenders.

Ladies, to fops and braggarts ne'er be kind,
No charms can warm 'em, and no virtues bind;
Each lover's merit by his conduct prove,
Who fails in honour, will be falſe in love. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE,

By the ſame Hand as the PROLOGUE.

Spoke by Mrs. PRITCHARD.

GOOD folks, I'm come at my young lady's bidding,
To ſay, you all are welcome to her wedding.
Th' exchange ſhe made, what mortal here can blame?
Shew me the maid that would not do the ſame.
For ſure the greateſt monſter ever ſeen,
Is doting ſixty coupled to ſixteen!
When wint'ry age had almoſt caught the fair,
Youth, clad in ſunſhine, ſnatch'd her from deſpair:
Like a new Semele the virgin lay,
And claſp'd her lover in the blaze of day.
Thus may each maid, the toils almoſt intrapt-in,
Change old Sir Simon for the briſk young Captain.
I love theſe men of arms, they know their trade:
Let daſtards ſue, theſe ſons of fire invade!
They cannot bear around the bait to nibble,
Like pretty, powder'd patient Mr. Fribble:
To dangers bred, and ſkilful in command,
They ſtorm the ſtrongeſt fortreſs, ſword in hand!
Nights without ſleep, and floods of tears when waking,
Shew'd poor Miſs Biddy was in piteous taking:
She's now quite well; for maids in that condition,
Find the young lover is the beſt phyſician;
And without helps of art, or boaſts of knowlege,
They cure more women, faith, than all the college!
—But to the point——I come with low petition,
For, faith, poor Bayes is in a ſad condition;
* *The huge tall hangman ſtands to give the blow,*
And only waits your pleaſures——ay, or no.
If you ſhould——pit, box, and gallery, egad!
Joy turns his ſenſes, and the man runs mad:
But if your ears are ſhut, your hearts are rock,
And you pronounce the ſentence——block to block,
Down kneels the bard, and leaves you when he's dead,
The empty tribute of an author's head.

* Alluding to Bayes's Prologue in the Rehearſal.

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THE END.